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C&I 445

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**Information Problem-Solving Lesson**

**5th Grade - Important American Project**

**Introduction:**

5th graders at Prairieland study American history as part of their Social Studies curriculum. For the past few years I had students complete a project where they researched a figure from American history and then created a PowerPoint slideshow to share what they learned with the rest of the class. This year I developed a project where students created a slideshow about their past, present and future as an introductory project for the school year. Because the students already have experience creating a slideshow, I thought I would make some changes to the Important American project.

First, I found a neat tool on the World Book online website that uses a series of drop-down menus to guide students to biographies of various people. Students can select a nationality, time period, gender and area of work/interest in order to help them find a historical figure. I decided to incorporate this tool into the project in order to increase student motivation by giving them a variety of choices. I also thought the tool would help find some lesser known historical figures that would help us learn about people that weren’t typically covered in their classroom lessons. It is important to note that World Book Online is a subscription service rather than a free website. My district has a district-wide subscription.

Also, I decided to change the final product that students create. Instead of a slideshow, I’ve asked students to create a biography of their historical figure that can be read by younger students in the school. I selected this product option because I think it will encourage students to really process what they find in their research in order to write the biographical information in simpler language for younger students. Also, our school has a strong tradition of Book Buddy classes, where older students read with younger students. I thought the biographies created by the 5th graders would be perfect to share with their Book Buddies. Lastly, in having the students use Pixie 3, a creative authoring program, it would give them a chance to learn and practice a variety of technology skills while creating their biography.

**Information Problem:**

Students will learn about an important person from American history in order to create an original “easy reader” biography for younger students.

**Objectives:**

Students will select an important American historical figure to research.

Students will use multiple sources to research their historical figure and obtain key information.

Students will use their research to create an original biography for younger readers using creative authoring computer software.

Students will share their biographies with each other and a student from a younger class.

**Standards:**

Common Core Standards

* CC.5.RI.7 Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.
* CC.5.RI.9 Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
* CC.5.W.2.a Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
* CC.5.W.7 Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
* CC.5.W.8 Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.

**Lesson Procedure:**

Note: 5th graders meet in the IMC one time per week for 35 minutes.

* Plan
* **Day 1 – Selecting a Historical Figure** – Students will be shown how to use the World Book Online Biography Center (<http://www.worldbookonline.com/student/biocenter?id=home>) to select an important person from American history. Students will then be given time to use the Biography Center tool to select a person that interests them. Students will fill out the Day 1 handout “Selecting a Historical Figure”.
* **Day 2 and 3 – Research** – After selecting a historical figure of interest, students will conduct research in order to learn more about the person they have chosen. Students will have the option to use the World Book Online Encyclopedia Student Version, FactMonster.com, books from their library and the World Book Encyclopedias. Students will need to obtain information from at least two different sources and record their sources. Students will be given the Day 2 handout “Important American Notes”. This handout will help guide them while taking notes by requiring them to find information on several topics. The handout also provides them with space to record the sources they use in their research.
* Do
* **Day 4, 5 and 6 – Creating a Biography** - After using a variety of sources to learn about their Important American students will begin work creating a computer generated biography for a younger audience.
* Students will practice a variety of technology skills including: saving a document, inserting a textbox, editing text, creating original images, inserting clip art, copy and paste, navigating a multi-page document.
* Students will use their notes to write a 5-6 page biography highlighting the most important information regarding the Important American they learned about.
* For each page of the biography students will create illustrations to accompany the text on the page.
* Review
* **Day 7 and 8 – Sharing** - First, students will share their completed biographies with their classmates. The students will be encouraged to offer suggestions for improvement in a constructive manner. This will also give students a chance to learn about other Important Americans from their classmates.
* The authors will then be given an opportunity to make changes to their projects based on the feedback they receive from their classmates.
* Finally, students will take their final products to a meeting with their Book Buddy class in order to share their biographies with a younger student.

**Evaluation:**

The teacher will review each student’s “Selecting a Historical Figure” handout in order to determine that an appropriate subject was selected. If needed, students will select a different person to research. The students will be observed during the note-taking process and be given additional instruction and guidance as needed. Students will receive feedback from their classmates and be given the opportunity to make changes based on that feedback prior to finalizing their projects. The final products will be evaluated using the attached rubric.

**Possible Enrichment Opportunities:**

* A student who finishes their project early could research historical figures from countries other than the United States.
* A student needing an extra challenge could write his/her biography as an autobiography, taking on the voice of the historical figure.

**Possible Modifications:**

* Students with reading difficulties have the option to use World Book Kids online, a version of the online encyclopedia that is written at a slightly lower reading level.
* If there was a concern that some students would struggle to work independently on this project, students could work with partners.

**Handouts:**

Day 1 Handout - Selecting a Historical Figure

Day 2 Handout - Important American Notes (guided note-taking page)

Beginning Reader Biography Rubric

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**5th Grade – Important American Project – Day 1 Handout**

**Selecting a Historical Figure**Use the World Book Student Biography Center to find an important person from American history for you to learn more about. Fill out the table below.

Name of Person: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Area of work/interest** | **Gender** | **Nationality and ethnicity** | **Time period** |
|  |  | United States |  |

Why did you choose this person to research? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**5th Grade – IMC – Important American Notes**

**Directions:** Use the following guide to take notes on the Important American you have chosen. You must use at least two sources. Your choices are: World Book Online Encyclopedia, books from the library, FactMonster.com, or the World Book Encyclopedia

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Early Life / Childhood / Family | |
|  |  |
| Adult Life | |
|  |  |
| Significant Event / Defining Moment | |
|  |  |
| Later Life / Death | |
|  |  |
| Additional Information / Interesting Facts | |
|  |  |

Sources:

1) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**5th Grade – IMC  
Important American Beginning Reader Biography Rubric**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **5** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **The biography contains complete illustrations that accompany and support the text on each page.** | All pages contain complete illustrations. | Many pages contain complete illustrations. | Most pages contain complete illustrations. | Some pages contain complete illustrations. | Few pages contain complete illustrations. |
| **The biography uses correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation and spelling.** | There are no errors in grammar, capitalization, punctuation and spelling. | There are few (1-4) errors in grammar, capitalization, punctuation and spelling. | There are some (5-9) errors in grammar, capitalization, punctuation and spelling. | There are several (10 – 14) errors in grammar, capitalization, punctuation and spelling. | There are many (15+) errors in grammar, capitalization, punctuation and spelling. |
| **The biography demonstrates an understanding of the historical figure by sharing accurate facts obtained from a variety of sources.** | Every page of the biography contains multiple accurate facts about the historical figures. | Most pages of the biography contain multiple accurate facts about the historical figures. | Many pages of the biography contain multiple accurate facts about the historical figures. | Some pages of the biography contain multiple accurate facts about the historical figures. | Few pages of the biography contain multiple accurate facts about the historical figures. |
| Comments: | | | | | |

Grade \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ / 15 Letter Grade \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_